

Show of Hands

Fairfax County Public Library Volunteer Newsletter



Fall 2005

Visit a Teen Volunteer Fair

The Fairfax County Public Library and Volunteer Fairfax will offer five teen volunteer fairs in October to help students find local groups that will help them fulfill community service hours required by area middle and high schools.



TEENS

FREE
Pick the Teen Volunteer Fair closest to you.

Do you need to fill community service hours for school? Come to one of our five Teen Volunteer Fairs and find out where you can volunteer!

Cosponsored by the Fairfax County Public Library and Volunteer Fairfax.

The fairs are scheduled October 4 at 7 p.m. at the George Mason Regional Library, 7001 Little River Turnpike, Annandale (703-256-3800); October 5 at 7 p.m. at the Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke (703-644-7333); October 6 at 6:30 p.m. at the Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germaine Drive (703-830-2223); October 6 at 7 p.m. at the Thomas Jefferson Library, 7415 Arlington Boulevard, Falls Church (703-573-1060); and October 15 at 2 p.m. at the Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Avenue East, Vienna (703-938-0405). The events are free and no registration is required.

More than 30 organizations will be represented at the various fairs, including groups such as the American Red Cross, the Capital Area Food Bank, the Fairfax County Park Authority, the Feline Foundation, the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club and Inova Fairfax Hospital. Check with a specific branch to learn which organizations will be at each fair.

For general information about volunteering at the Fairfax County Public Library, call 703-324-8332 or check the library's Web site at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library.

Mastering our Gardens

If you have ever enjoyed the red hibiscus or orange canna lilies in the tropical garden at the Kings Park Library, you can thank volunteer Noreen Gerstner. A graduate of Fairfax County's Master Gardener program, Gerstner has volunteered at the library branch since 1996. During that time, she has supervised 14 projects, using the strong backs of Eagle Scouts to create gardens that encircle the building. There's a shade garden, wildlife habitat and even a butterfly garden.

She got her start after noticing that the beds outside the branch were looking a bit scruffy. "I kept saying someone should clean that up. Finally I decided I could be the one to do it."

Now, every Friday morning, she and a few volunteers – she's always looking for more – weed, water and pick up a week's worth of discarded items in the landscaped beds around the building.

“I enjoy using the library and anything I can do to make it more appealing to the community is something I like to do.”

– Teri O'Brien

Over at the Chantilly Library, another Master Gardener, Teri O'Brien, has helped create gardens around a concrete pathway, complete with a table that library customers can use in good weather. She's been volunteering for seven years and also uses Eagle Scouts, as well as middle and high school students, to help her put in garden beds. The Friends of the Chantilly Library provide the funds to buy plants and she decides what species are needed and where they should be put.

"I enjoy using the library, and anything I can do to make it more appealing to the community is something I like to do," she explains.

O'Brien also is always looking for more green thumb volunteers to help her with her work. She envies the Pohick



■ Continued on page 2

Mastering our Gardens continued...



▲ Master Gardener Norene Gerstner in front of the tropical garden at the Kings Park Library.

Volunteer Teri O'Brien, a Master Gardener for nine years, oversees Eagle Scouts as they help landscape at the Chantilly Regional Library. ▼



▲ When not gardening, volunteer Pat Henley volunteers at the check-out desk at the Martha Washington Library.

Regional Library, which has a regular group of garden volunteers who call themselves "Weeders and Readers."

At the Martha Washington Library in Alexandria, Pat Henley, a graduate of the Greenspring Gardens Master Gardener program, has been volunteering for the past two years. She has been working with high school students to help redo plantings around the parking lot. It's a bit of a challenge to find plants that are hardy enough to take a lot of wear. She's planted yucca and sedum, among others. Most plants have been donated.

Henley enjoys the educational aspect of her work. "As a Master Gardener, I was looking for projects where I could share my knowledge of plants," she says. "The library is a public place." She can demonstrate low maintenance plantings that require little pesticide, she explained.

Norene, Teri and Pat are only a sample of Master Gardeners who help design gardening projects for library branches. But you don't need a certificate to garden at the library. If you've got a green thumb, call your nearest branch or contact Kate. Wanderer@fairfaxcounty.gov; 703-324-8332. You can also apply online. Go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library and click on "Do You Know...You Can Volunteer at the Library?"



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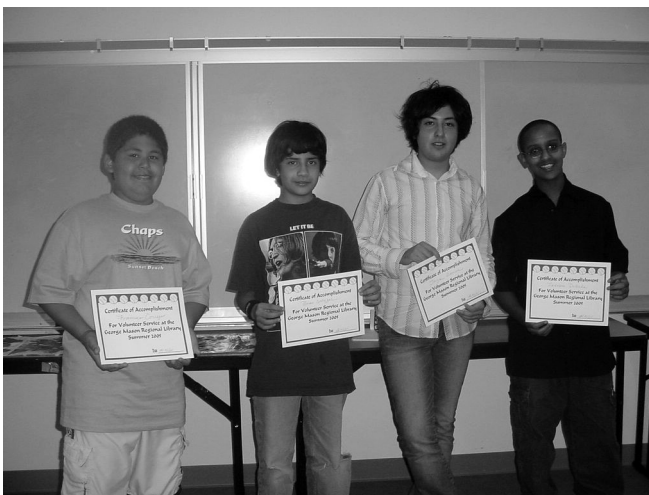
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Thanks for the Memories



▲ Four Summer Reading Program volunteers display their certificates of appreciation at a special ceremony at the George Mason Regional Library on September 1, 2005.

Volunteer Profile: Art Gauvain

If you visit the Kings Park Library on Wednesdays between the hours of 10 a.m.-5 p.m., you will meet Art Gauvain at the check-out desk. His friendly and approachable manner invites interaction with people of all ages. Plus, if you are lucky enough to chat with him, he can relate fascinating stories about a career that took him around the world with his beloved wife, Connie.

In 1992, when the Kings Park Library reopened after remodeling, Art volunteered to help restack the bookshelves. Staff saw an able-bodied volunteer, grabbed him, and it's a good thing they did. Art volunteered four hours per week for many years. And once hours were restored at community branches, he took on the regular eight-hour shift he now works.

Asked why he initially chose the Kings Park Library, Art explained he always visited the branch and was pleased with the service he received. Connie, his wife, was a prolific reader and would check out 150-175 books every year. Art felt he owed the library something for all those years of great service.

He says he continues to volunteer because he enjoys meeting people. A Kings Park resident off and on since 1992, he meets the grandchildren of neighbors and friends as they pass through the library. He prides himself on his good memory, and it comes in handy when he sees a familiar face!

Once, when the now-retired Martha Ray was manager at Kings Park, an upset customer wanted to speak with the "head librarian." Staff sought out Martha, but the customer pointed to Art and insisted he wanted to speak with that head librarian! From then on Art and Martha joked often about who was really in charge of the branch.

Prior to joining the Kings Park Library volunteer corps, Art worked for the federal government from 1952-1992. He was recruited while in the military, where he had served in Korea as a frogman in what is now known as the Navy Seals. Through work, he and his wife traveled around the world.

One of the strangest career experiences Art likes to share occurred in Amman, Jordan when he was on special assignment in the desert. It was February and had snowed 28 inches – the first time in 110 years for a desert snowstorm. Bedouins had set up a camp two or three miles away from where he was stationed. Their tents had been flattened and covered with snow, so Art and some fellow workers volunteered to help clear them and even shared their rations with the nomadic people. Of course, Jordan owned no snow-clearing equipment. Yet the roads needed to be cleared of snow, as well as stranded vehicles. So King Hussein ordered his army tanks to clear the roads by pushing everything – cars, snow, whatever – off.

Although Art has enjoyed his career and travels, he is now content to fix up his house and volunteer at the library. Sadly, he lost his wife Connie in May, 2004. Staff and customers alike are all lucky he chooses to spend his retirement years volunteering at the Kings Park Library!



▲ Volunteer Art Gauvain stays in touch with neighbors and friends at the Kings Park Library.

– Daria Parnes

Apply for a Scholarship



Training is not just for staff. Volunteers who would like to attend a class or seminar related to their volunteer work can apply for a scholarship from the Fairfax County Public Library Foundation, Inc. The next deadline for applications is December 15, 2005.

The Library Foundation's Friends Scholarship Fund provides several scholarships a year ranging from \$150 to \$750 to support the continuing education of volunteers and staff within the Fairfax County Public Library. Applications are accepted twice a year, with closing dates of June 15 and December 15, for events taking place six months before or after each deadline.

Scholarships may be used for registration, travel and related expenses to attend seminars, conferences, lectures, meetings, adult education classes or college and university classes when not enrolled in a formal degree program. Attendance at such events must benefit the library in a demonstrable fashion. The characteristics factoring into the merit selection of an individual for a scholarship will include:

- Length of service
- Stated commitment to the library
- Stated value of the scholarship event to the organization and the individual

Volunteers are encouraged to apply. For more information and forms, please visit the Fairfax County Public Library Foundation's Web site at www.fcplfoundation.org; contact the foundation by phone at 703-324-8300; or e-mail info@fcplfoundation.org.



Volunteer Opportunities

The Fairfax County Public Library is recruiting volunteers. Please help the agency advertise its opportunities by clipping this list and sharing it with friends, family, neighbors, coworkers, workplace volunteer programs, schools, clubs or houses of worship – wherever someone may be able to help.

Fall 2005

Deliver pre-selected books to homebound customers once a month for Access Services (Fairfax County Government Center). Requires good knowledge of books, access to car and ability to lift bags of books. Access Services also needs volunteers with computer skills to check books in and out during weekday daytime hours. Adults. Beena.Pandey@fairfaxcounty.gov; 703-324-8380.

Assist with clerical tasks (filing, photocopying, word processing, preparing mailings) at Library Administration (Fairfax County Government Center), weekday daytime hours. Minimum age 16. Linda.Gifford@fairfaxcounty.gov; 703-324-8324.

Scan community newspapers for articles about the Fairfax County Public Library at Library Administration (Fairfax County Government Center), weekday daytime hours. Two-three hours per week. Adults. Kay.Garrison@fairfaxcounty.gov; 703-324-8305.

Help process gift books at the Fairfax City Regional Library. Add gift book copies to the library's database and cover hardback books. Training provided. Ideal qualifications: library experience and computer skills. Must be available for at least a year. Adults. Pam.Johnson@fairfaxcounty.gov; 703-293-6227.

Locate reserved books for customers at the Kings Park Library, Mondays or Saturdays, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., or work at the checkout desk on Saturday afternoons. Adults. One year commitment. Sue.Lem@fairfaxcounty.gov; 703-978-5600.

Locate reserved books for customers at the Patrick Henry Library any weekday, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Adults. One year commitment. Marcia.Ferreira@fairfaxcounty.gov; 703-938-0405. Patrick Henry also needs volunteers to teach Word/MS Office. Adults. Barbara.DeBeaufort@fairfaxcounty.gov; 703-938-0405.

Interested in teens and literacy? Have you taught middle or high school? Assist the Lorton Library in providing programs for teens. Adults. Possible college internship opportunity. Denise.Morgan@fairfaxcounty.gov; 703-339-7385.

Master Gardener or volunteer with expertise and knowledge of native plants is needed to care for the Thomas Jefferson Library's Butterfly and Bird Attracting Garden. Periodic weeding and pruning; ability to manage groups of volunteers for occasional large projects. Help with weekly watering and maintenance of indoor plants also desired. Helen.Critchfield@fairfaxcounty.gov; 703-573-1060.

Spanish Language Intern volunteer is needed at the Chantilly Regional Library to teach a basic Spanish language class to library staff. Must be fluent in Spanish. Bonnie.Worcester@fairfaxcounty.gov; 703-502-3883.

Offer computer instruction at the Richard Byrd Library (Springfield). Adults. Jerry.Herrera@fairfaxcounty.gov; 703-451-8055.

Teach MS Office Suite at the George Mason Regional Library (Annandale). Adults. Nancy.Ehlke@fairfaxcounty.gov; 703-256-3800.

Many branches also seek volunteers to organize shelves (ages 12 and up, or as a family); help the Children's Department by preparing program materials (ages 14 and up); check in books (adults); or, with MLS degree, provide support for the Information Department in providing reference service.

Training is available for all positions. For information, contact Kate.Wanderer@fairfaxcounty.gov; 703-324-8332. To visit the volunteer section of the library's Web site, or to apply online, go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library and click on "Do You Know...You Can Volunteer at the Library?"



Show of Hands is published by the Fairfax County Public Library, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 324, Fairfax, VA 22035, 703-324-3100. Contact the Director of Volunteer Programs, Kate Wanderer, at 703-324-8332 or kate.wanderer@fairfaxcounty.gov. Visit the library's Web site at: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library



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♿ Reasonable accommodations will be made upon request. Call 703-324-8380 or TTY 703-324-8365.

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